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Gwinn Taps Veteran Felony Prosecutor to Lead DV Unit

Newly Restructured Unit Poised to Increase Effectiveness

After a comprehensive review of the structure and staffing of the San Diego City Attorney's nationally acclaimed Domestic Violence Unit, City Attorney Casey Gwinn announced the appointment of veteran felony domestic violence prosecutor Pat McGrath as Head Deputy City Attorney of the Domestic Violence Unit.

The move came after weeks of deliberations on how to continue the unit's cutting edge misdemeanor prosecution strategies. McGrath supervised and led the San Diego County District Attorney's South Bay Domestic Violence Unit for three years and is currently assigned to the Family Protection Division of the DA's downtown office.

"Pat is uniquely qualified to lead our Unit into the next decade," said City Attorney Gwinn. "He has the strong blend of qualifications necessary to live up to the demands and pressures of leading a Unit that deals with life and death issues every day."

Over the past several weeks the City Attorney consulted with domestic violence experts around the country and considered a number of possible candidates. The City Attorney sought an individual with experience leading a domestic violence unit, with local and national training expertise, and with strong relationships with law enforcement agencies as well as victim advocacy organizations. "I am convinced we have identified the best possible person to lead our team into the future," said Gwinn.

McGrath will be appointed on March 30, 1998. "I have observed the performance of the DV deputies in the City Attorney's office for the past several years and have always been impressed with their capabilities in holding abusers accountable and for their dedication to protecting and saving the lives of victims," said Deputy District Attorney Pat McGrath. "I am extremely honored to be able to use my experience to lead this outstanding team into the future."

In addition to his work as a prosecutor, McGrath serves in the Naval Reserve as a Commanding Officer of a helicopter squadron. Prior to his seven years with the District Attorney's Office, he served for eleven years on active duty as a helicopter pilot where he rose through the ranks to Commander in the United States Navy.

In addition to bringing in a veteran prosecutor to lead the Unit, Gwinn has authorized the restructure of the Unit to reflect his priority and commitment to reducing domestic violence. Immediately the Unit will begin automating onto a local area network that will increase individual effectiveness with personal computers for each member of the Unit. In addition, the Unit will now consist of two Senior Deputies to oversee the Unit and Gwinn will seek the addition of Legal Assistants to assist his prosecutors in preparing cases for trial.

Resources necessary for the increase in staffing comes substantially from grant monies. Since taking office just over a year ago, the City Attorney has aggressively pursued grant money and was recently awarded a total of

over \$1.2 million over the next three years in state and federal grants including a recent grant providing for the addition of two full time deputies who will specialize exclusively in widely under reported same sex and elder abuse domestic violence cases. This brings the number to eleven specially trained Domestic Violence Prosecutors in the Unit.

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